

The Bacon House
New Haven, Connecticut

54
HABS CONN.-75
HABS
CONN.

5- NEWHA

9.

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Connecticut

Historic American Buildings Survey
Harold H. Davis, District Officer
29 Whitney Ave., New Haven, Conn.

THE BACON HOUSE

New Haven, New Haven County, Conn.

Owner: Mr. Henry B. Sargent, 313 St. Ronan St., New Haven

Date of Erection: 1760

Architect or Builder: Joshua Chandler

Present Condition: Good

Number of Stories: Two and one-half

Materials of Construction: Stone foundation
Slate roof
Clapboard sidewalls
4 brick chimneys

Other Existing Records: History of New Haven County.
Old Inns of Conn. - M. D. Terry.

List of Photographs:

1. Front Elevation (West)
2. Mantel Detail - Southwest Room First Floor
3. Door Detail
4. Mantel Detail - Northwest Room Second Floor
5. Newel Post Detail

HABS CONN.-75

HABS

CONN

S. NEWHA

THE BACON HOUSE

New Haven, New Haven County, Conn.

Standing in Church Street in New Haven, Connecticut, in the shadows of the new Southern New England Telephone Company Building, is the Bacon House, or as it is sometimes called, the New Haven Coffee House. This is not the original site for this historic old inn; it having been moved to its present location in 1820, having originally stood on the corner of Court and Church Streets where the present Post Office now stands, and on which ground prior to that was located the equally famous Tontine Hotel.

This old tavern which holds many an interesting tale of the gala New Haven of old, was originally the residence of Joshua Chandler, a lawyer, a graduate of Yale in the class of 1748, and a staunch Tory sympathizer. The home was built in 1760, and in 1779 on July 6th., after the British invasion of this city, Joshua Chandler, along with his family, left with the British and embarked for England. They were shipwrecked, however, on the coast of Nova Scotia and perished trying to find their way to civilization.

The estate here in New Haven was confiscated and placed in probate, with announcements being duly made in the local Journal advising creditors to file their claims with the administrators.

Eleven months later the house and property having been purchased by Jabez Smith was advertised as being open to the public as a coffee-house, this appellation having just become popular. It was advertised as the place from which the stage would take its scheduled departure.

Mr. Smith operated the inn for only a few years selling the establishment to Jacob Ogden who had remarked here from Hartford. In Hartford he was very prominent in business circles and in the vestry of Christ's Church. His removal to New Haven was occasioned by a reverse in fortune.

The coffee-house in all its existence was set considerably back from Church Street and had a huge lawn before it. It was the mecca for all the baristère and court figures, and many an important court case was

HABS CONN.-75

HABS
CONN.

5- NEWHA

9

THE BACON HOUSE

New Haven, New Haven County, Conn.

discussed comfortably over a cup of ale in this, which was probably the most popular establishment in the town at that time.

When the house was moved further north on the same street, it became the home of the Reverend Dr. Leonard Bacon who was installed pastor of the First Church on March 9, 1825. He was one of the most influential pastors the church has ever had, and served his pastorate wielding great influence over the entire nation as well as his own particular parish. He was well educated having graduated from Yale in 1820, and during his entire life he wrote profusely especially on the slavery issue. Abraham Lincoln once said to Reverend Dr. Joseph P. Thompson that he received his first convictions of the enormity of slavery from the writings of Dr. Bacon. Even now, there remains on the south wall of the church, a tablet eulogizing this old "Divine" who so successfully acted as pastor from 1825 until his death on December 24, 1881.

The house has recently been owned and resided in by Mrs. Henry B. Sargent. At this writing the house is unoccupied and there is doubt as to whether it will be razed or removed to a new location, but we do note that many of the mantels have been removed and sold to appreciative buyers.

It is a structure typical of the architecture of its period and has a very interesting fireplace, in the southwest room on the ground floor. The fireplace which is original, has no individual chimney, but is connected by a plastered duct which runs through a closet to the chimney of the south-east room just below the second floor. The house also has some fine dutch ovens in the basement fireplaces and is itself in good condition.

Sources of Information: History of New Haven County.
Old Inns of Conn.- M. D. Terry.

Author: *Edward J. Vitale*

Approved: *Harold W. Davis* Date: *June 23, 1939*